

FINELY PLAYED

Were these two Achievements of the Noted Ben Swartz.

RACHEL'S DIAMOND-SET RING

And the Letter of Condolence to the Elder Ayres With a Bill for Ten Dollars—The Unique Methods Which Mr. Swartz Adopted to Secure a Diamond Ring and a Balance Due Him for Clothes.

Everybody in Washington who wears store clothes made to order, knows Ben Swartz, the avenue tailor. Ben has the characteristic shrewdness of centuries of ancestors from Abraham and Isaac to Rothchild and Sam Gasseheimer. Neither Rothchild nor mine host of the Lawrence are Ben's ancestors, they are used simply to euphemize the metaphor.

Ben is a cosmopolitan and utterly free of the ancient prejudices against his Gentile neighbor. He will make clothes for the most unregenerate of the Philistines with the same alacrity that he serves his own people. He is generous, too, to a fault as will be seen further along. Hence when St. Peter's Church held its fair and the members went around peddling tickets for prizes to be raffled off at the corner of the "festivities," Ben bought one. His object was, of course, to help the church, as all religions are alike to Ben, and not to draw custom to his shop.

Now Ben had a sweetheart and desiring to make her a valuable present as an evidence of his affection he presented her with this fifty cent ticket and admonished Rachel to keep it in her—well the lady's usual receptacle for paper money. Rachel was informed that many valuable prizes were put up by St. Peter's fair and that the ticket might draw one of them. As luck would have it, the ticket won the chief prize, a valuable diamond ring, and Ben hugged himself before and after meals. But soon his joy had a sombre tinge and he reproached himself for his thoughtless generosity in giving Rachel the ticket, especially as he had no line on her and it wasn't a sure thing whether she would ever become Mrs. Swartz. After several hours time with his tinker, Ben evolved a scheme to secure the diamond to himself and satisfy Rachel and here is how he did it.

He visited his girl, and ascertaining that she knew of the good luck, tendered his services to obtain the diamond. Rachel gave Ben the ticket from her — and Ben hid himself to the chairman of the fair committee and obtained the spare.

Now Ben's great scheme was but partially accomplished. He must give Rachel a diamond ring, for Rachel knew that her ticket drew the prize. Ben incidentally, on his way up the avenue, dropped in at his friend Koch's jewelry establishment and purchased a thirty-five cent "phony" ring made of Pittsburgh glass. Reaching the residence of his inamorata Ben burst in full of indignation and exclaimed: "Well, now, Rachel, see what a nice thing this Katholik is. Here is the ring they gave; it is not a diamond, but a paste. Rachel you never have anything to do with these Katholik cheats."

Rachel wept but accepted the phony ring and wears it in honor of Ben, while Ben wears the genuine diamond and Rachel is no wiser, except that she has her private opinion of "Katholiks." Ben's latest and best, however, came off in connection with the Ayres tragedy. Ben read the account of the death of the young census clerk, and hauling up his ledger discovered that the murdered youth owed him a balance of ten dollars on a suit of clothes. Ben scratched his head for an idea and he found it by return mail. Seating himself at his mahogany writing desk he penned a letter to Ayres senior, full of pathos and wet with tears. The letter was in Ben's best vein and brought tears to the eyes of Mr. Ayres until he examined the inclosure. The inclosure was Ben's bill for the ten dollars due by the younger Ayres with a pathetic request for its early settlement.

Frank Waltemire, the messenger, Ben sent with the ten dollars and Ben paid him the usual collector's fee of ten per cent.

Thus happily ended Ben's duty to the dead and the prompt collection of outstanding accounts.

There is only one adverse comment which the hypocritical are justified in making on Ben's methods, and that is the false impression he created in Rachel's mind of the Catholic congregation of St. Peter's. Ben is amenable to criticism and exposure on this account, and hence The Globe gives the facts publicly.

His letter of condolence and bill to Mr. Ayres was a fine stroke of policy, which Ben alone thoroughly understands and appreciates. It is safe to state that not one in ten millions of his Gentile fellow citizens would think of thus condensing sympathy and business in the same envelope. The Globe cannot, in view of all the facts, hope that this particular Ben's "trick" may increase and his shadow never grow less.

He is Cynical

Washington, May 28.
Editor GLOBE: Speaking about interesting, racy bits, there is one glaring exhibition which is daily thrust upon us all, negro, and white, and which, if it falls short of disgusting indecency, it is so commonly indulged in by both the residents of "Hooker's Division" and the faultless females of the West End. What I have reference to is the accepted and universally adopted method in vogue by the ladies for the display of certain portions of their anatomy. The approved method, apparently, is to don a skirt fitting perfectly plain about the hips and devoid of tucks and plaits. This skirt is worn long, and, merely to prevent dragging, of course, is firmly grasped in the rear at a point as low as the manipulator can conveniently reach, and—here is the artistic feature—is then pulled tightly around to a point well in front of the hips. The effect, as produced by these artists cannot well be described. Some heighten it by the addition of high heeled boots and a distinct forward carriage. The olden dames wore hoop skirts. It might be interesting to compute how long it will be at the present rate of the advance of civilization before the ladies will adopt tights, which will, at least, possess the virtue of giving an impartial outline rather than concentrating the whole effect upon that portion of

their charms at present thrown into such unattractive prominence. Giving the ladies all due credit, the writer thinks that they attach much more desirable significance to the importance of this free exhibition than the same is deserving of, and they might be able to produce a better, or, at least, a less ridiculous effect, if not so indiscretely and lavishly in their bestowal of the same upon any and all who appear upon our thoroughfares.
J. E. W.

PATENT VIOLATIONS

In the Government Printing Office of Civil Service Law.

Washington, May 31.
Editor GLOBE: The Civil Service promotion regulations for the Government Printing Office provides:

First. The employees of the Government Printing Office shall be grouped as follows:

First group—All skilled laborers.
Second group—All persons employed in mechanical trades, including proofreaders and copyholders.

Third group—All persons employed in clerical capacity.
Second. Where vacancies are not filled by transfer, reinstatement, or original appointment, promotion from class to class (which means, according to definition, under rule 2 of civil service, from one position to another position of higher salary in the same group) "in the same grades within any group, may be made on any test of fitness prescribed by the Public Printer and not disapproved by the Civil Service Commission."

Third. Any person employed in one group who has previously been regularly employed in any other group, and has been qualified, may be transferred to his former group and grade without examination. No other person shall be transferred or promoted from one group to another group until he has passed the examination prescribed in section 4 or section 5 of these regulations.

Then follows at length a detailed statement under sections 4 and 5 of the mode and manner of examinations, etc.

Section 6 guards against promotion of employees during probationary period.

Section 7 provides for the grouping of employees by the Public Printer.

Section 8 provides that all changes, transfers, promotions, and demotions, and the reasons therefor shall be reported to the civil service commissions by the Public Printer.

Section 9 reads: "In order to carry out the foregoing regulations, the Public Printer shall nominate to the Commission not less than three persons to act as a board of promotion, for notwithstanding all these carefully prepared rules and regulations by the Civil Service Commission, the fact remains that although Mr. Palmer has been supposed to be Public Printer for over four years, and that almost the entire personnel of the office (all in fact except the clerks in the front of office and a few Brian pets in other places) has been changed by demotions and promotions, there has not been even a semblance of examination or test of fitness in any case, with one exception. Further than this, the executive order of June 10, 1896, which is still in force and has the binding effect of law, makes it unlawful for any executive officer to assign any unclassified laborer to any classified duty; and yet the printing office has laborers doing the work of clerks, of electricians, of messengers, of assistants to the storekeeper, of, in fact, almost every occupation in the office, except compositors and bookbinders. And promotions have been made continually from class to class, from group to group, and from the unclassified to the classified service without regard to either the civil service rules or law; in violation of which I will cite a very few cases of the many: When Mr. Palmer became Public Printer there was yard master; Mr. Palmer abolished the position of yard master, but put a man by the name of McClelland, who had never been employed in the office before, to performing the same duty as a laborer, which he is still doing. And here I will again cite the instance of "Eddie Brian" and J. G. Brian, whom it will be remembered, both entered the service of Mr. Palmer, Public Printer, as laborers. "Eddie" being at once assigned to the work of an electrician, and E. G. to that of a clerk. The latter, I understand, has recently taken and passed the clerk's examination, as has also another young man who entered the service in the same manner and was assigned a desk in the same room with young Brian, and have been thereby safely landed in the sheltering folds of the classified service at a compensation of \$3 per day. But just how they both managed, after passing examinations, to be immediately certified and appointed to the identical positions they had each occupied as laborers for years is a fit subject of inquiry.

There is also a young man by the name of Collins, who entered the office a few months ago as a laborer, who is at the present time doing the work of and receiving the emoluments, some \$1.00 per annum, of stenographer and typewriter to the Public Printer.

Another young man, by the name of Mathews (who, by the way, is a good fellow), who was originally a messenger on one of the wagons, is now doing the work of an electrician, and thereby keeping some one, who served three or more years, out of a job. Maj. J. M. Brown, promoted from watchman to stable boss at compensation of \$4 per day. Surveys and holidays included. A. L. Moore, promoted from assistant foreman in bindery to foreman of folding room, at salary of \$2.00 per annum. And so, one might run on ad infinitum through the entire office, outside of a favored few, who "stand in" with the coterie I mentioned in my former letter. And with bare one exception, that of timekeeper in press room, there has never been an examination for promotion in the office, nor would there have been in that case, had it not been to shut out an individual who was obnoxious to these people and had too much pull to be turned down without a showing. A similar position on the bindery floor, having been filled, only a short time previously by transferring Mr. Unkerfer, a watchman at Mr. Rickett's door, at a compensation of \$2.50 per day to the place at a salary of \$3.20 per day, notwithstanding the fact that the previous incumbent only received \$2.50 per day therefore.
Nobisc.

More Departmental Favoritism.

Boston Globe: The Stockbridge family, of 1233 W street N. W., seem to be especial Government pets of the first water. Their records are as follows: Virgil D. Stockbridge has recently been reappointed to the classified (?) service of the Patent Office at a salary of \$1,200 per annum, and at the same time has two daughters who register as War Department clerks. The young women above mentioned have been upon the Government pay-roll for several years past.

Our boys who risked life and limb in Cuba and the Philippines can make first-rate civil service examination ratings and never get so much as a chance of an appointment, even though they be certified by the commission when a vacancy exists. Again, veterans, with civil service competitive examination ratings and military records to correspond (well above the 90 mark, in some instances) are recharged from the Departments whenever any reduction is to be made, while entire families of pets with influence but not any record are held. We most sincerely believe that when favoritism is to be shown—well, some of our deserving young men who faced the Spanish hail at El Caney and vicinity should be given a chance, especially where they have families demanding their support.

The south side of W street, between 13th and 14th, is said to have a rather large showing in the Departmental favoritism line, and we will have further information later.

Take the Stockbridge family as a sample, however, it must be pretty thick and well developed.
N. H. H.

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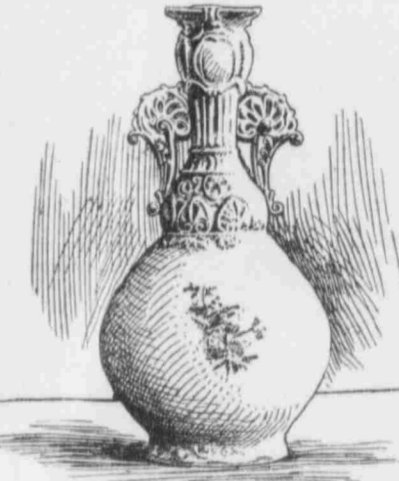
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